

2012: The Year of Downtown



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NEWS UPDATE NEWS UPDATE NEWS UPDATE

Free Small Business Publicity Tool-kit Available

Do you have a great business story, but don't know any media contacts? Are you getting ready to stage a grand opening, but aren't familiar with organizing a ribbon cutting? The **Economic and Urban Development Department** has compiled a complimentary **Small Business Publicity Tool-kit**, which is currently available online at <http://bit.ly/xlzcIN>.

This free publication includes information on the following:

- Developing a media advisory
- Writing a news release
- Conducting a ribbon cutting or groundbreaking
- Ways to increase your media coverage odds
- Tips on handling television interviews
- Tips for getting started on social media
- Local print and broadcast contact information

Downtown Parking To Be Revamped

The city of Las Vegas is rolling out a new plan designed to upgrade public parking services downtown.

The first phase, to be implemented from March to June 2012, includes creating a "one-stop-shop" for parking services. As part of this effort, a newly created Parking Services Division will combine all of the city's current parking functions under the department of Economic and Urban Development. Staff will take this opportunity to review the city's policies and procedures regarding parking permits, enforcement, towing, booting and more.

Las Vegas As New Silicon Valley?

Forbes recently listed Las Vegas as one of the up-and-coming alternatives to Silicon Valley. For further reading, visit <http://onforb.es/xfZGj9>.

The second phase, which will begin in July and take place over the course of 18 months, will involve upgrading meter technology to make it easier for customers to pay for parking using credit cards.

Staff will also be developing a plan for easier parking access on nights and weekends during special events, both in city-controlled parking areas and on private land. This plan will incorporate informational and directional signage. Parking rates and hours will also be reviewed, as will parking proximity to downtown businesses, the need for long-term parking and establishing parking permits for certain areas.



New meters downtown will allow customers to pay for parking using credit cards.

Future goals include giving people "real time" information on parking availability, thus making it more convenient to find a parking space in the downtown area. The city will work closely with the private sector on this as only nine percent of the downtown parking inventory is controlled by the city.

One stop business service shop at the city's new Development Services Center located at 333 N. Rancho Dr. Details available at <http://bit.ly/pzIYW4>.

Native Recipes Make Downtown Thai Restaurant A Hit

The new restaurant owned by 32-year-old entrepreneur **Dan Coughlin**, located in Fremont East, is called **Le Thai**. The restaurant offers traditional Thai food, including Pad Thai hailed as “the best outside of Thailand.”

Chef and owner Dan Coughlin learned the family recipes from his native-Thai mother and grandmother.

Coughlin keeps the dishes light by replacing much of the oil with water.

“It’s much more difficult to cook these dishes with less oil, especially the ones in the wok. You have to be very careful,” he says. “It’s so easy to make a mistake and ruin the whole meal within a matter of seconds – all your work can be gone in an instant.”



Le Thai is in the Fremont East Entertainment District.

Coughlin blends flavors, including lemongrass, ginger, lime and Thai chili pepper, without the characteristic heaviness of many curries and noodle dishes. The fresh food, combined with an average \$9-\$10 entrée price, gained Le Thai a loyal following in a matter of weeks.

Consistently busy since its quiet soft opening in early November, Le Thai sits on the south side of Fremont Street in a space that was formerly a vacant storefront. After five months of renovations, the restaurant includes a corrugated metal exterior, a cozy interior with a few tables, a bar and windows into a small kitchen. Doors open onto a courtyard patio for outdoor dining under strings of white lights. The patio area turns into a beer garden with DJs on select nights. Inside, sports play on a flat screen TV above the bar, while feel-good music provides an energetic soundtrack.

Large windows facing Fremont Street invite diners to people-watch, wave at passing friends and appreciate the increasingly vibrant streetscape. Le Thai seems to embrace the neighborhood as much as the neighborhood embraces Le Thai.

Le Thai is located at 523 Fremont St. Call 702.778.0888 or email info@lethaivegas.com for more information or delivery.



Older sidewalks throughout several urban areas will receive upgrades in the upcoming months.
Photo: Michael Campbell

Improvements Scheduled for Area Sidewalks

In December, the **Las Vegas City Council** approved \$2.2 million in federal dollars for sidewalk improvements in certain urban areas.

Funding will come from the Community Development Block Grant received from the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

The funding and improvements will be overseen by the **Neighborhood Development Division** of the city’s Economic and Urban Development Department.

Improvements are scheduled for older neighborhoods located in Ward 3, represented by **Councilman Bob Coffin** and Ward 5, represented by **Councilman Ricki Y. Barlow**.

The Ward 3 areas scheduled for improvements are surrounded by Charleston Boulevard to the south, Interstate 515 as the northern boundary, Bruce Street on the east side and Las Vegas Boulevard on the west.

The Ward 5 areas receiving sidewalk upgrades are bordered by Owens Avenue to the north, Bonanza Road at the southern end, Interstate 15 to the east and Martin L. King Boulevard to the west.

Improvements are scheduled to be completed by the end of 2013. These improvements will include completion of unfinished sidewalks and replacement of damaged sidewalks. Work will also include installation of sidewalks with ramps, curbs and gutters that are compliant with the American with Disabilities Act, where none had previously existed.